

Hobbies

ANA director pledges upgrading of coin grading operation

By Roger Boye

Chicago native Robert J. Leuver is beginning his third month as executive director of the American Numismatic Association with a list of goals that's nearly as long as his impressive resume.

Among other things, Leuver wants to increase membership in the nation's largest organization of coin collectors and halt the decline in revenue from the ANA's coin authentication and certification service. The ANA, head-

quartered in Colorado Springs, Colo., has about 34,000 members—down several thousand in the last few years.

"Our ANA is striving to improve its image, especially in the eyes of non-collectors," wrote ANA President Stephen R. Taylor in his monthly column in *The Numismatist*. He also described Leuver's hiring as the most exciting thing to happen to the ANA in many years.

In addition to membership problems and revenue shortfalls, the ANA suffers from widespread

complaints about its coin-grading standards.

For the past five years, Leuver, 61, was director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which produces U.S. currency and postage stamps. In 1986, he was one of 44 federal employees to win the government's distinguished executive award. Leuver's wife, Hilda Ortiz, also is a Chicago native.

One-pound notes no longer are legal tender in Great Britain, thanks to the widespread use of

one-pound coins introduced in 1983.

The Bank of England demonitized the notes earlier this year, although officials still will exchange paper notes for the "round pound," according to re-

ports in the hobby press. The British government will reduce the cost of making money because a one-pound coin should last in circulation for decades, while a paper pound usually wears out in less than a year.